

3.2 SERVENEBRASKA GUIDANCE ON COMMISSIONER ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMISSION

The Commission recruits local leaders with strong community connections to actively assist in carrying out the mission to mobilize Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programs. The National and Community Service Act (1993) established the federal Corporation for National and Community Service in Washington, DC administratively merging the existing VISTA program and Senior Corps programs such as Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) with the Commission for National and Community Service AmeriCorps programming. The Commission administers AmeriCorps National Service grants.

ORIGIN OF SERVENEBRASKA – THE NEBRASKA VOLUNTEER SERVICE COMMISSION

The Commission was created by a gubernatorial Executive Order in 1994 after Congress approved the creation of the AmeriCorps (AC) program in 1993. Each state has a state service commission that administers the AmeriCorps program and promotes volunteerism and service. Important recent federal legislation, the Serve America Act signed by the President in April 2009, significantly expands the AmeriCorps and national service programs for up to 250,000 members nationwide.

COMMISSION FUNDING

ServeNebraska is a separate state agency with primary revenues to support the Commission and its programs coming from the federal Corporation for National and Community Service. Additional in-kind support services are received from the Commission's host state agency - the Department of Health and Human Services and others who support the work of the Commission. It is an expectation that Commissioners assist with bringing funds and resources to the Commission.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

Working with the Commission Executive Director, the Governor appoints interested people to the ServeNebraska Commission who have submitted applications. Applications are accepted at any time during the year and the Governor makes appointments in May or June each year. The July meeting is the first one that new appointees attend. The term of appointment is three years. Members may be appointed for up to three consecutive terms.

COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Commission Board meets a minimum of four times a year in January, April, July and October. Meeting locations are determined by the Commission Board. Commissioners host the meetings and provide a small lunch (this is an example of an in-kind donation to the Commission). Additional meetings may be scheduled as the need arises. A meeting will last only one day and is routinely scheduled for the last Thursday of the month. Periodically, a 1 ½ day meeting may be scheduled – usually for strategic planning. The meetings are held from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. with committee meetings in the morning, a networking lunch and the business meeting. Additional meetings may be called.

COMMISSIONER ROLE

Commissioners are active and engaged in policy guidance, helping to secure resources, promoting civic engagement and reaching out to Nebraskans as ambassadors of volunteerism and service. The primary Commission Board functions include the following:

- Governance
- Policy/Direction
- Outreach to Elected Officials and the Public

- Resource Acquisition (cash and in-kind)
- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Commissioner Development
- Community Volunteerism
- AmeriCorps Programming
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Financial Oversight
- Report to the Governor Annually
- Vision/Planning
 1. 5-Yr Strategic Plan
 2. State Service Plan

EXPECTATIONS OF COMMISSIONERS

Minimum expectations for Commissioners include the following:

- Attend all Commission in-person meetings;
- Serve as an officer during one term of service;
- Attend a New Commissioner Orientation;
- Actively serve on a committee and attend all Committee meetings (in-person before Commission meetings & by phone conferences between meetings);
- Attend official Commission events;
- Bring resources to the Commission and actively raise funds or sponsorships to support the Commission and its programs.
- Develop external relationships including the media and contacts to benefit the Commission.
- Be an active ambassador for the Commission and National Service.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members of the Commission who are affiliated with another organization as an officer, director, trustee, full-time volunteer or employee cannot assist that applying organization in preparing a grant application to the Commission and they cannot engage in discussions or decisions as part of the Commission during the grant application review process. In addition, they cannot participate in the oversight, evaluation, continuation, suspension or termination of a grant award.

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Specific commissioner appointment categories are mandated in the Executive Order and through federal law creating state service commissions. Appointed by the Governor, there will be no more than 25 voting members and no more than 10 ex-officio members. No more than 50% can be from one political party. Commissioners are to represent the diversity and geographical breadth of Nebraska. There are other parameters that are used such as maintaining an even balance of political party representation. The Commissions actively recruits individuals who can bring expertise, connections and financial and in-kind resources to the Commission.

Required membership categories per Executive Order 94-5:

- Representative of community-based agency or organization
- Head of the Nebraska Department of Education, or designee
- Representative of local government
- Representative of local labor organization
- Representative of business
- Representative of national service program
- Representative of person with disabilities
- Individual age 16-25 who is participant or supervisor of service program for youth, or campus-based or national service program

- Individual w/expertise in educational, training & development needs of youth, particularly disadvantaged youth
- Individual w/experience promoting older adult involvement in service/volunteerism
- Representative of the volunteer sector

Membership categories that are a priority but not required:

- Educators, including institutions of higher education agencies; reps of education; local
- Experts in delivery of human services, environmental, education or public safety services to communities and persons (another possibility for you)
- Representative of Indian tribes
- Representative of out-of-school or at-risk youth